Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 GEORGE 00370 182033Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----------190616 100205 /11
R 181950Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4224

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 0370

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, GY, MILI
SUBJECT: RUMOR OF SOVIET NAVAL BASE

REF: GEORGETOWN 0363

1. DURING OUR MEETING FEBRUARY 16, AS A SPIN-OFF FROM THE MAIN THRUST OF OUR CONVERSATION, WILLS DESCRIBED THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE SOVIET NAVAL BASE RUMOR LATE LAST YEAR. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE FROM VARIOUS REPORTING SOURCES, REPORTS CIRCULATED IN GUYANA IN NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER LAST YEAR CONCERNING A PROPOSAL, ALLEGEDLY MADE BY THE SOVIET ECONOMIC MISSION TO GUYANA, THAT THE GUYANESE PROVIDE A SITE--HOPE ISLAND ON THE ESSEQUIBO RIVER--FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A DEEP WATER PORT WHICH THE SOVIETS COULD USE AS A BASE FOR REFUELING OF NAVAL AND FISHING VESSELS. SOME RUMORS ALSO INDICATING THAT THE SOVIETS MIGHT ESTABLISH MILITARY BASES.

2. WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF DENYING THAT THE GOG WOULD ALLOW GUYANA TO BE USED BY ENEMIES OF THE US (REFTEL), AND AS AN ILLUSTRATION OF HOW HOSTILE RUMORS GET SPREAD, WILLS SAID THAT THE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 GEORGE 00370 182033Z

SOVIET ECONOMIC MISSION WHICH HAD VISITED GUYANA IN SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER LAST YEAR DID NOT RAISE SUBJECT OF NAVAL BASE WITH GOG. CUBAN AMBASSADOR IVAN MARTINEZ, HOWEVER, HAD SUGGESTED TO THE GUYANESE THAT AS A GESTURE THEY MIGHT OFFER THE SOVIET UNION DEEP WATER PORT FACILITIES AND A REFUELING STATION FOR SOVIET FISHING AND NAVAL VESSELS. WILLS

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

SAID THE "WE" (PRESUMABLY MEANING THE CABINET) DISCUSSED THE MATTER AND WANTED NOTHING TO DO WITH IT. HE SAID NO RESPONSE WAS MADE TO THE CUBAN AMBASSADOR AND NO MENTION OF SUBJECT PASSED BETWEEN GUYANESE OFFICIALS AND THE SOVIETS.

3. SUBSEQUENTLY VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR MARQUEZ CAME TO WILLS AND SAID HE HAD A REPORT THAT THE GUYANESE WERE PLANNING TO ALLOW THE SOVIETS TO BUILD A NAVAL FACILITY. WILLS HAD TOLD HIM THAT WAS NOT TRUE. NEVERTHELESS, HE LEARNED SUBSEQUENTLY THAT MARQUEZ HAD REPORTED THE PROPOSAL TO CARACAS AS IF GUYANA HAD AGREED TO ALLOW THE SOVIETS TO HAVE A BASE. WILLS HAD CONFRONTED MARQUEZ WITH THIS BUT MARQUEZ HAD BLAMED ONE OF HIS SUBORDINATES FOR THE REPORT.

4. COMMENT: THS REPORT THAT THE SOVIETS SOUGHT NAVAL FACILITIES IN GUYANA HAS A CURIOUS RESILIENCY. IT SURFACED SEVERAL TIMES DURING JANUARY. ACCORDING TO A USUALLY RELIABLE EMBASSY SOURCE, DR. WERNER HAENOLD, DIRECTOR-GENERAL MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE WHO ARRIVED IN GUYANA JANUARY 25 TOLD THE SOURCE PERSONALLY THAT IT WAS KNOWN IN OFFICIAL CIRCLES IN EAST BERLIN THAT THE SOVIETS ASKED THE GOG FOR A NAVAL BASE HERE. THE FACT THAT WILLS HAD RECENTLY REPEATEDLY GIVEN US ASSURANCES THAT GUYANA WOULD NOT PERMIT ITS SOIL TO BE USED AS A FOREIGN BASE TENDS TO
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 GEORGE 00370 182033Z

INDICATE THAT HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT THE POSSIBLE US REACTION TO THE RUMORS. SIMILARLY THE FACT THAT HE NOW RAISED THE ISSUE DIRECTLY WOULD INDICATE THAT SOMETHING HAPPENED CONCERNING THE NAVAL BASE.
BLACKEN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CONSTRUCTION, ALLEGATIONS, MILITARY BASES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977GEORGE00370
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770059-0905
Format: TEL
From: GEORGETOWN
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770228/aaaaaypu.tel
Line Count: 103
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 80a47cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 77 GEORGETOWN 363
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3284117
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RUMOR OF SOVIET NAVAL BASE
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, GY
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/80a47cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009